

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

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S E C R E T BEIRUT 3562

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BROWN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE

SUBJ: NEXT MOVES IN LEBANON

1. THERE ARE FOAR KEY POWER ELEMENTS IN THE LEBANESE POLITICAL PUZZLE: SYRIA,PLO, RIGHT AND LEFT. HERE IN BEIRUT WE ARE IN TOUCH ONLY WITH THE LATTER TWO IN ANY MEANINGFUL WAY. DESPITE YOUR EXCHANGES WITH ASAD, THE SYRIANS SEEM MOST SUSPICIOUS OF U.S. MOTIVES AND OBJECTIVES. SYRIAN-CONTROLLED MILITARY AND POLITICAL FORCES IN LEBANON ARE OPENLY ANTAGONISTIC. THE PLO IS OUTWARDLY ANTI-AMERICAN YET RECEPTIVE TO OVERTURES AS YOU KNOW FROM OTHER CHANNELS. WE ARE NOT REPEAT NOT, HOWEVER, ENGAGED IN ANY DIALOGUE WITH PLO AND HAVE VIRTUALLY NO REPEAT NO INPUT INTO THEIR DECISION-MAKING PROCESS.

2. OUR RELATIONS WITH THE RIGHT, AND BY THIS I MEAN THE MARONITE QUARTET OF FRANGIE, CHAMOUN, GEMAYEL AND KASSIS, ARE FAIR. WE CAN TALK,BUT THE NEW ELEMENT OF AN IMPLIED PLO CONTROL OF A FUTURE LEBANON IS BOTH FRIGHTENING THEM AND LEADING THEM TO ASK QUESTIONS OF THEMSELVES AS TO HOW FAR USG IS BEHIND THE SYRIAN-PLO MOVE.

3. THE LEFT,AND BY THIS I MEAN JUMBLATT AND HIS COTERIE

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OF VARIOUS LEFTISTS, IS ALSO MAKING QUESTIONS OF ITSELF

AND OF USG POLICY. WE ARE NOT REPEAT NOT DEALING WITH ALL THE LEFT, ESPECIALLY THOSE ELEMENTS LIKE THE IRAQI-CONTROLLED ALF, WHICH ARE THE PROVACATEURS CAUSING THE FIRE FIGHTS.

4. LEFT AND RIGHT, FOR DIFFERING REASONS, WOULD LIKE US TO BE PLAYING A GREATER ROLE WITH BOTH SYRIA AND THE PLO. I'VE MADE IT PLAIN THAT THE USG KEEPS IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH ASAD AND THAT I AM NOT REPEAT NOT EMPOWERED TO MEET ARAFAT, AS FUNSETH AND NESSEN SEEM COMPELED TO TELL THE AMERICAN PRESS EVERY DAY.

5. WE ARE IN CONSTANT TOUCH WITH OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE LEBANESE SOCIETY: THE NON-MARONITE CHRISTIANS; THE POLITICIANS, THE SUNNI AND SHIA RELIGIOUS LEADERS, THE BANKERS AND BUSINESSMEN, THE MILITARY AND SO ON. BUT THESE ARE ALL RATHER HOPELESS BY-STANDERS IN THE POWER PLAY.

6. AS THE FIGHTING GOES ON AND ONE CEASEFIRE AFTER ANOTHER IS IGNORED, THE COUNTRY IS SLOWLY FALLING APART. WE ALREADY HAVE, AS I'VE SAID, DEFACTO PARTITION. AS EACH DAY GOES BY, THE NEWLY FORMED MARONITE INSTITUTIONS, COMMITTEES AND SO ON MOVE CLOSER TO THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE GOVERNMENT.

7. AS I SEE IT, I SHOULD MOVE AGAIN WITH MARONITES AND JUMBLATT PLUS A FEW OTHERS WHO HAVE SOME WEIGHT, AND TRY TO REVERSE THE TENDENCY TOWARDS THINGS FALLING APART AGAIN. BUT I WON'T BE STRIKING AT ALL THE POWER CENTERS. SOMEHOW WE NEED TO GET IT ACROSS AGAIN TO SYRIANS THAT WE ARE NOT REPEAT NOT WORKING AT CROSS PURPOSES. AS FOR THE PLO, THEY'LL HAVE TO GET OUR MESSAGE FROM THE SYRIANS OR THE LEFTISTS WITH WHOM THEY DEAL IN LEBANON.  
BROWN

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